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19(1) & 21(1)(b)  
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**Les pages 1 & 2  
Font l'objet d'une exception totale  
conformément aux dispositions de  
paragraphes  
19(1) & 21(1)(b)  
de la *loi sur l'accès à l'information***

**Caron3, Nathalie (INFC)**

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**From:** Minister of Transport / Ministre des Transports (TC) <TC.MinisterofTransport-MinistredesTransports.TC@tc.gc.ca>  
**Sent:** January 11, 2018 2:06 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Minister / Ministre (INFC)  
**Subject:** concernant le projet de construction du nouveau pont Champlain et les enjeux liés à son échéancier  
**Attachments:** Demande de rencontre urgente - Échéancier Pont Champlain

[REDACTED]  
 Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction (International)  
 [REDACTED]

Monsieur,

Je donne suite à votre lettre du 5 décembre dernier dans laquelle vous demandez à me rencontrer concernant le projet de construction du nouveau pont Champlain et les enjeux liés à son échéancier.

J'ai pris bonne note du contenu de votre lettre et je vous remercie de me l'avoir fait parvenir. Puisque le projet de construction du nouveau pont Champlain relève entièrement du ministre de l'Infrastructure et des Collectivités, mon collègue l'honorable Amarjeet Sohi, vous comprendrez que je ne peux malheureusement pas accepter votre demande de rencontre.

Je transmets donc au ministre Sohi une copie de cette correspondance afin qu'il en prenne connaissance. Je suis persuadé qu'il saura y accorder toute l'attention voulue.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

L'honorable Marc Garneau, C.P., député  
 Ministre des Transports

c.c. L'honorable Amarjeet Sohi, C.P., député  
 Ministre de l'Infrastructure et des Collectivités



Infrastructure  
Canada

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## SCENARIO NOTE

### Meeting between Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction And Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec

<b>Date/Time:</b>	December 12, 2017 / 6:00 PM-6:45 PM & December 13, 2017 / 3:30-4:15 PM
<b>Location:</b>	Centre Block, Rm 107-S & Confederation Building, Rm 707
<b>Subject:</b>	Health and Safety concerns of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project workers
<b>Participants:</b>	<p><b><u>Meeting #1:</u></b>  The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.  Mike Burton, A/Chief of Staff to the Minister  Kate Monfette, Director of Communications, Minister's Office  Mathieu Bélanger, Director of Policy, Minister's Office  M. Marc Fortin, Associate Deputy Minister, Infrastructure Canada  [REDACTED] President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction  [REDACTED] Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction.</p> <p><b><u>Meeting #2 :</u></b>  The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.  Mike Burton, A/Chief of Staff to the Minister  Kate Monfette, Director of Communications, Minister's Office  Mathieu Bélanger, Director of Policy, Minister's Office  M. Marc Fortin, Associate Deputy Minister, Infrastructure Canada  M. Marc Miller, Parliamentary Secretary  Caitlin Szymberski, Assistant to the Parliamentary Secretary  [REDACTED] Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec  [REDACTED] Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec  [REDACTED] Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec</p>
<b>Departmental Objectives</b>	<p>On December 12, 2017, you are scheduled to meet with [REDACTED] President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction, the union that represents the majority of workers on the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project. The union is worried about the negative impact of the Project schedule on the workers' Health and Safety. The meeting will provide an opportunity to listen to the union's representations and to reassure the union that no compromise will be accepted for the workers' Health and Safety, and that this is a priority for the Government of Canada.</p>
<b>Stakeholder Objectives</b>	

We understand that [REDACTED] may ask you to postpone the New Champlain Bridge substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018. The union argument is that the workers are under pressure to work faster in order to catch up on lost time. For the union, project acceleration is seen as negatively impacting the Health and Safety of the workers on site, and the Quality of the Project.

### **Context/Overview**

- SSL and Canada have agreed in principle to a series of measures to accelerate construction of the New Champlain Bridge. This is being done due to the project encountering delays that, without acceleration, would result in the bridge opening later than the substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018.
- On December 5, 2017, the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction (International) sent you a letter requesting an urgent meeting with you and the Minister of Transport, Marc Garneau. [REDACTED]
- As per the Project Agreement (Contract) between Canada and SSL, occupational Health and Safety issues on the site of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- Canada is kept apprised by SSL of matters related to Health, Safety and prevention on the site via a monthly report on the progress of project work and through bi-weekly meetings where certain safety and security related matter are discussed.

### **Points to Register**

#### **Occupational Health and Safety**

- I am happy we can have this conversation around the Health and Safety of the workers.
- The Government of Canada is taking the union's concerns seriously because Health and Safety is our most important priority during the construction of the bridge.
- The Government of Canada's objective is to build a quality project in the safest way possible so the bridge can be delivered by December 2018.
- Health and Safety of workers is SSL's responsibility however it is important for me to hear and understand the workers concerns. My objective is to continue our collaborative dialogue with SSL in a spirit to continuously improve the Health and Safety of the workers.
- I understand that acceleration measures mostly target on site works, requiring more shifts day and night, more lines of work with appropriate monitoring.
- Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work not trying to squeeze out more production and accelerate the pace during a given shift.

- *Can you please tell me exactly (1) what your concerns are with specific examples that would help me understand and (2) your proposed solutions to address them?*
- As part of the acceleration measures being implemented by SSL, the Quality Management System and the workers' Health and Safety are being closely monitored to ensure that acceleration does not impact the project quality and the workers' Health and Safety.
- The successful delivery of this major project depends on our ability to work together.

### **Quality**

- As you know, the quality management of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- I understand that SSL undertakes extensive inspection and testing of construction to ensure the finished products achieve the required quality.
- I also understand that (1) Canada and the Independent Engineer (IE) monitor the activities of SSL to ensure they are performing in accordance with the Project Agreement and (2) all non-compliance reports opened by SSL and the IE are closely monitored and followed up on if we are not satisfied with how they are addressed.
- The Government of Canada objective is to build a quality project in the safest way possible so the bridge can be delivered by December 2018.
- As part of the acceleration measures being implemented by SSL, the Quality Management System and the workers' Health and Safety will be closely monitored to ensure that acceleration does not impact the project Quality and the workers' Health and Safety.
- The successful delivery of this major project depends on our ability to work together.

### **Annexes:**

Annex A Background on Occupational Health and Safety, and on Quality

Annex B [REDACTED]

Annex C [REDACTED]

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**SCENARIO NOTE**

**Meeting between  
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and  
President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction**

<b>Date/Time:</b>	December xx, 2017
<b>Location:</b>	TBD
<b>Subject:</b>	Health and Safety concerns of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project workers
<b>Participants:</b>	<p>The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>M. Marc Fortin, Associate Deputy Minister, Infrastructure Canada</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED], President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction.</p>

**Departmental Objectives**

On December xx, 2017, you are scheduled to meet with [REDACTED] President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction, the union that represents the majority of workers on the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project. The union is worried about the negative impact of the Project schedule on the workers' health and safety concerns. The meeting will provide an opportunity to reassure the union that the workers' health and safety is a priority for the Government of Canada.

**Stakeholder Objectives**

We understand that [REDACTED] would like the minister to postpone the New Champlain Bridge substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018. The union argument is that the workers are under pressure to work faster in order to catch up on lost time. For the union, working faster can lead to accidents on the work site.

**Context/Overview**

- SSL and Canada have agreed in principle to a series of measures to accelerate construction of the New Champlain Bridge. This is being done due to the project encountering delays that, without acceleration, would result in the bridge opening later than the substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018.
- On December 4, 2017, different medias articles reported that one year before the completion of the work on the new Champlain Bridge, the workers already had to make over 2000 repairs on key components of the bridge fabricated in Spain. Some media have also stated that the acceleration of construction activities could negatively impact the Quality of the work, as well as increase the risk for the health and safety of the workers on site. The reports included quotes, reports and photos from six anonymous sources said to be working on the project. An SSL project director, who was interviewed on December 1, was also quoted.

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- On December 5, 2017, the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction (International) sent you a letter requesting an urgent meeting with you and the Minister of Transport, Marc Garneau, [REDACTED]

### **Points to Register**

- I am happy we can have this conversation around the Health and Safety of the workers.
- The Government of Canada is taking the union's concerns seriously because Health and Safety is our most important priority during the construction of the bridge.
- [REDACTED]
- The Government of Canada objective is to build a Quality project in the safest way possible so the bridge can be delivered by December 2018.
- I understand that acceleration measures mostly target on site works, requiring more shifts day and night.
- Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work not trying to squeeze out more production.
- To improve the Health and Safety of the workers, we are open to consider other potential solutions as long as these proposed solutions can help deliver a Quality project safely and on time (December 2018).
- *Can you please tell me exactly what your concerns are and your proposed solutions to address them?*
- As part of the agreement on acceleration that is currently being negotiated, the Quality Management System followed by SSL and the workers' Health and Safety will be closely monitored to ensure that acceleration does not impact the project Quality and the workers' Health and Safety.



**BACKGROUND**

- As per the Project Agreement (Contract) between Canada and SSL, occupational Health and Safety issues on the site of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- Section 19 of the Contract deals with health and safety matters and is clear to the effect that SSL is responsible at all times for the safety of all persons on the site.
- SSL has been recognized as the principal contractor on the site of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project by the *Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail du Québec* (CNESST). The Contract states that SSL must take all necessary steps to fulfill its obligations, functions and duties under the applicable Health and Safety Laws. SSL must ensure that all persons working on the site respect their obligations under the applicable Health and Safety laws.
- Since the start of the project SSL has prepared and implemented a prevention program which is required by law and complies with Good Industry Practice. According to the Contract SSL must implement and keep updated a project-specific safety management plan (Schedule 17, Section 3.6). This plan addresses the approaches to safety and implementation of SSL's responsibility for the Health and Safety of all persons working on the project and the general public.
- Canada is kept apprised by SSL of matters related to Health, Safety and prevention on the site via a monthly report on the progress of project work and through bi-weekly meetings where certain safety and security related matter are discussed.
- Since the beginning of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project, the incident frequency is **2.04** compared to **8.78** at the provincial level as reported by the most recent statistics available from the CNESST for the year 2015 (See attached Annex A for more detail on Health and Safety-Lead Indicators and Annex B for details with regards the Project Non-Compliance Report (NCR) since the beginning of the Project).

**Acceleration Measures and Occupational Health and Safety Concerns**

- Acceleration measures mostly target on-site works, requiring more shifts day and night. Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work, not trying to squeeze out more production.
- This said, with respect to prefabricated piers segments, these works are now all completed, so acceleration will have no impact. With respect to the fabrication of steel elements in Spain, SSL does not need to implement acceleration measures as the works are now progressing well (it is expected that steel pier caps will be completed by the end of April 2018).
- Fabrication of the 599 steel box girders in Quebec is now almost completed so acceleration will not impact this work either.

**PROTECTED B****SCENARIO NOTE**

**Meeting between  
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and  
President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction**

<b>Date/Time:</b>	December 12, 2017 / 6:00 PM-6:30 PM
<b>Location:</b>	Centre Block, Rm 107-S
<b>Subject:</b>	Health and Safety concerns of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project workers
<b>Participants:</b>	<p>The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.  Mike Burton, A/Chief of Staff to the Minister  Kate Monfette, Director of Communications, Minister's Office  Mathieu Bélanger, Director of Policy, Minister's Office  M. Marc Fortin, Associate Deputy Minister, Infrastructure Canada  [REDACTED] President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction.  [REDACTED] Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction.</p>
<b>Departmental Objectives</b>	
<p>On December 12, 2017, you are scheduled to meet with [REDACTED] President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction, the union that represents the majority of workers on the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project. The union is worried about the negative impact of the Project schedule on the workers' Health and Safety. The meeting will provide an opportunity to listen to the union's representations and to reassure the union that no compromise will be accepted for the workers' Health and Safety because it is a priority for the Government of Canada.</p>	
<b>Stakeholder Objectives</b>	
<p>We understand that [REDACTED] would like the minister to postpone the New Champlain Bridge substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018. The union argument is that the workers are under pressure to work faster in order to catch up on lost time. For the union, working faster can negatively impact the Health and safety of the workers on site and the Quality of the Project.</p>	
<b>Context/Overview</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSL and Canada have agreed in principle to a series of measures to accelerate construction of the New Champlain Bridge. This is being done due to the project encountering delays that, without acceleration, would result in the bridge opening later than the substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018.</li> </ul> <p>On December 4, 2017, different media articles reported that one year before the completion of the work on the new Champlain Bridge, the workers already had to make over 2000 repairs on key components of the bridge fabricated in Spain. Some media have also stated that the acceleration of construction activities could negatively impact the quality of the work, as well as increase the risk for the health and safety of the workers on site. The reports included quotes, reports and photos from six anonymous sources said to be working on the project. It is important to note that at the beginning of the prefabrication process in Spain, considering the transportation logistics involved and the fact that shipments leave at a frequency of about once per month, SSL had decided to</p>	

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have the Spanish prefabrication plant send some of their first steel segments before the final inspection and repairs were performed on said segments. This meant that SSL was fully aware that elements would not be "final" upon arrival and would need to be inspected and repaired, if necessary, on site in Canada. SSL changed its approach after the first few elements were delivered and SSL decided to have the elements fully inspected, to the extent possible, repaired and signed-off on at the prefabrication plants in Spain prior to delivery. Some of the segments identified in the report that was the subject of news headlines were those elements that were not sent in their "final" state. SSL was fully aware that there would be defects on said elements that would need to be inspected, identified and repaired. The thorough inspection process on site allowed to detect a number of defects, which are described in the aforementioned report and which will be re-inspected once repaired prior to the completion date.

- On December 5, 2017, the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction (International) sent you a letter requesting an urgent meeting with you and the Minister of Transport, Marc Garneau,

**Points to Register****Occupational Health and Safety**

- I am happy we can have this conversation around the Health and Safety of the workers.
- The Government of Canada is taking the union's concerns seriously because Health and Safety is our most important priority during the construction of the bridge.
- The Government of Canada's objective is to build a quality project in the safest way possible so the bridge can be delivered by December 2018.
- Health and Safety of workers is SSL's responsibility however it is important for me to hear and understand the workers concerns. My objective is to continue our collaborative dialogue with SSL in a spirit to continuously improve the Health and Safety of the workers.
- I understand that acceleration measures mostly target on site works, requiring more shifts day and night, more lines of work with appropriate monitoring.
- Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work not trying to squeeze out more production and accelerate the pace during a given shift.
- *Can you please tell me exactly (1) what your concerns are with specific examples that would help me understand and (2) your proposed solutions to address them?*
- As part of the acceleration measures being implemented by SSL, the Quality Management System and the workers' Health and Safety are being closely monitored to ensure that acceleration does not impact the project quality and the workers' Health and Safety.
- The successful delivery of this major project depends on our ability to work together.

**Quality**

- As you know, the quality management of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- I understand that SSL undertakes extensive inspection and testing of construction to ensure the finished products achieve the required quality.
- I also understand that (1) Canada and the Independent Engineer (IE) monitor the activities of SSL to ensure they are performing in accordance with the Project Agreement and (2) all non-compliance reports opened by SSL and the IE are closely monitored and followed up on if we are not satisfied with how they are addressed.
- The Government of Canada objective is to build a quality project in the safest way possible so the bridge can be delivered by December 2018.
- As part of the acceleration measures being implemented by SSL, the Quality Management System and the workers' Health and Safety will be closely monitored to ensure that acceleration does not impact the project Quality and the workers' Health and Safety.
- The successful delivery of this major project depends on our ability to work together.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Occupational Health and Safety**

- As per the Project Agreement (Contract) between Canada and SSL, occupational Health and Safety issues on the site of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- Section 19 of the Contract deals with health and safety matters and is clear to the effect that SSL is responsible at all times for the safety of all persons on the site.
- SSL has been recognized as the principal contractor on the site of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project by the *Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail du Québec* (CNESST). The Contract states that SSL must take all necessary steps to fulfill its obligations, functions and duties under the applicable Health and Safety Laws. SSL must ensure that all persons working on the site respect their obligations under the applicable Health and Safety laws.
- Since the start of the project SSL has prepared and implemented a prevention program which is required by law and complies with Good Industry Practice. According to the Contract SSL must implement and keep updated a project-specific safety management plan (Schedule 17, Section 3.6). This plan addresses the approaches to safety and implementation of SSL's responsibility for the Health and Safety of all persons working on the project and the general public.
- Canada is kept apprised by SSL of matters related to Health, Safety and prevention on the site via a monthly report on the progress of project work and through bi-weekly meetings where certain safety and security related matter are discussed.
- Since the beginning of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project, the incident frequency is **2.04** compared to **8.78** at the provincial level as reported by the most recent statistics available from the CNESST for the year 2015 (See attached Annex A for more detail on Health and Safety-Lead Indicators and Annex B for details with regards the Project Non-Compliance Report (NCR) since the beginning of the Project).
- SSL has a work site health and safety prevention program with higher standards than those of the *Loi sur la Santé et Sécurité du travail (LSST)* and the *Code de sécurité pour les travaux de construction (CSTC)*. For example :
  - SSL requires that a worker be in protection against a fall as soon as he finds himself at a height of 1.8 m compared to the law that advocates this protection at 3 m.
  - SSL targets safety measures for all workers who are less than 3 m from the water's edge compared to the law that advocates 2 m.
  - SSL has signed and sealed lifting plans for all lifting of workers with crane in a basket compared to the law which has no obligation to produce a plan but only legal obligations on the cranes themselves and the baskets.
  - SSL does periodic inspections of its tools and equipment.
  - SSL has specialized teams dedicated to continuous marine rescues

#### **Health Security Audits:**

- Occupational Health and Safety management system Standard (OHSAS 18001) Audit: SSL has been successful in obtaining this external accreditation every year.
- SSL does its own internal Audit every month.

- Corporate Audit conducted by the 4 partners of the Consortium every year. SSL was successful through these Audits with a respective score of 94% in 2016 and 94 % in 2017.

Union's participation:

- There are three full-time representatives of the unions at the site (represented by INTER, FTQ and SQC). They represent the workers' health and safety interests. They promote their member's health and safety and ensure that the health and safety plans are followed. In addition, the unions are actively participating to the different health and safety committee in place and they can communicate directly to the CNESST and CNESST's inspectors.

CNESST: An inspector is assigned to the Project.

- In 2017, there were 13 visits by an inspector.
- In 2016, there were 12 visits
- In 2015, there were 3 visits

Visits of health representatives Security partners (Consortium):

- On average, health and safety representatives of the various partners visit the Project Site 3 to 4 times a year.

Health and Safety Training

- Since the beginning of the project, SSL has given 22,560 hours of Health and Safety training.
- For 2017, 110975 hours of training has been given by SSL (risks on the water, working at heights, enclosed space, lifting platform, forklift, etc.).
- SSL is working with the unions and all the different teams on the site to continuously improve its Health and Safety systems. In November 2017, SSL held a Health and Safety Forum in order to take a note of the concerns and recommendations of the participants. SSL is developing an action Plan, which will be released soon.

**Acceleration Measures and Occupational Health and Safety Concerns**

- Acceleration measures mostly target on-site works, requiring more shifts day and night. Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work, not trying to squeeze out more production.
- A review of SSL's safety indicators has shown that there is no correlation between the reported imminent dangers and the implementation of the acceleration measures since September 2017 where acceleration measures started to be implemented.
- This said, with respect to prefabricated piers segments, these works are now all completed, so acceleration will have no impact. With respect to the fabrication of steel elements in Spain, SSL does not need to implement acceleration measures as the works are now progressing well (it is expected that steel pier caps will be completed by the end of April 2018).

- Fabrication of the 599 steel box girders in Quebec is now almost completed so acceleration will not impact this work either.

### **Quality**

- As per the Project Agreement ("PA") between Canada and SSL (the Private Partner, or "PP"), quality management of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL. The PA describes in detail SSL's obligations, as well as the roles of the Independent Engineer (IE) and Canada in ensuring that SSL fulfills its contractual obligations.

### **Current Roles**

#### **SSL**

- As SSL is responsible for quality under the PA, it undertakes a variety of activities to fulfil its obligation. It is required to certify the project management activities as ISO 9001 compliant, which ensures that appropriate systems and procedures are in place to ensure that quality is achieved. SSL also actively monitors construction, through two activities:
  - 1) Quality Control, where the construction teams with support of inspectors and testing laboratories carry out activities to ensure compliance; and
  - 2) Quality Assurance, where separate staff review the work of the construction teams.
- SSL undertakes extensive inspection and testing of construction to ensure the finished products achieve the required quality.
- Non-compliance reports are opened by SSL as required in order to ensure that both process irregularities and product deficiencies are corrected. Recurring irregularities, deficiencies, or non-compliance reports that are likely to reoccur unless process corrections are made, are addressed through a Correction Action Plan, which determines the root cause of the problems so that adjustments can be made.
- Moreover, the P3 nature of the project provides a strong incentive for SSL to ensure the project activities its quality objectives. As SSL will operate the project for 30 years once construction is complete, it will have to have to repair any defects and/or increase maintenance to accommodate any quality shortfalls. In addition, the PA requires the project to be handed over to Canada in good condition at the conclusion of the 30-year operating period. The PA further provides that an Independent Handback Engineer will inspect the works at that time.

#### **Independent Engineer**

- The Independent Engineer undertakes Quality Management System Audits, and Surveillance Quality Audits. The former are audits of SSL's management of the quality function, including checking to ensure they are compliant with their ISO 9001 Quality certification, while the latter are inspections of construction activities and finished products.
- The IE files reports on its activities, and opens NCRs as required. This includes inspections at fabrication plants in Quebec and in Spain.

Canada

- Canada monitors the activities of SSL and the IE, to ensure they are performing in accordance with the PA. This involves reviewing the Quality Documentation, including Quarterly Reports and similar system documents, but also involves monitoring of SSL's and the IE's construction inspection. In particular, Canada closely monitors all non-compliance reports opened by SSL and the IE, and follows up if it is not satisfied with how they are addressed.
- In addition, Canada monitors construction activities, using an Owner's Laboratory (OL), the Owner's Engineer (OE), and internal staff. Canada opens non-compliance reports as required to address concerns identified by these three parties.



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Infrastructure  
Canada

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## SCENARIO NOTE

### Meeting between Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction

<b>Date/Time:</b>	December 12, 2017 / 6:00 PM-6:30 PM
<b>Location:</b>	Centre Block, Rm 107-S
<b>Subject:</b>	Health and Safety concerns of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project workers
<b>Participants:</b>	<p>The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.  Mike Burton, A/Chief of Staff to the Minister  Kate Monfette, Director of Communications, Minister's Office  Mathieu Bélanger, Director of Policy, Minister's Office  M. Marc Fortin, Associate Deputy Minister, Infrastructure Canada  [REDACTED] President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction.  [REDACTED] Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction.</p>
<b>Departmental Objectives</b>	
<p>On December 12, 2017, you are scheduled to meet with [REDACTED] President of the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction, the union that represents the majority of workers on the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project. The union is worried about the negative impact of the Project schedule on the workers' Health and Safety. The meeting will provide an opportunity to listen to the union's representations and to reassure the union that no compromise will be accepted for the workers' Health and Safety, and that this is a priority for the Government of Canada.</p>	
<b>Stakeholder Objectives</b>	
<p>We understand that [REDACTED] may ask you to postpone the New Champlain Bridge substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018. The union argument is that the workers are under pressure to work faster in order to catch up on lost time. For the union, project acceleration is seen as negatively impacting the Health and safety of the workers on site, and the Quality of the Project.</p>	
<b>Context/Overview</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSL and Canada have agreed in principle to a series of measures to accelerate construction of the New Champlain Bridge. This is being done due to the project encountering delays that, without acceleration, would result in the bridge opening later than the substantial completion contractual deadline of December 1, 2018.</li> <li>• On December 5, 2017, the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction (International) sent you a letter requesting an urgent meeting with you and the Minister of</li> </ul>	

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Transport, Marc Garneau, [REDACTED]

- As per the Project Agreement (Contract) between Canada and SSL, occupational Health and Safety issues on the site of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- Canada is kept apprised by SSL of matters related to Health, Safety and prevention on the site via a monthly report on the progress of project work and through bi-weekly meetings where certain safety and security related matter are discussed.

**Points to Register****Occupational Health and Safety**

- I am happy we can have this conversation around the Health and Safety of the workers.
- The Government of Canada is taking the union's concerns seriously because Health and Safety is our most important priority during the construction of the bridge.
- The Government of Canada's objective is to build a quality project in the safest way possible so the bridge can be delivered by December 2018.
- Health and Safety of workers is SSL's responsibility however it is important for me to hear and understand the workers concerns. My objective is to continue our collaborative dialogue with SSL in a spirit to continuously improve the Health and Safety of the workers.
- I understand that acceleration measures mostly target on site works, requiring more shifts day and night, more lines of work with appropriate monitoring.
- Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work not trying to squeeze out more production and accelerate the pace during a given shift.
- *Can you please tell me exactly (1) what your concerns are with specific examples that would help me understand and (2) your proposed solutions to address them?*
- As part of the acceleration measures being implemented by SSL, the Quality Management System and the workers' Health and Safety are being closely monitored to ensure that acceleration does not impact the project quality and the workers' Health and Safety.
- The successful delivery of this major project depends on our ability to work together.

**Quality**

- As you know, the quality management of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.

- 3 -

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- I understand that SSL undertakes extensive inspection and testing of construction to ensure the finished products achieve the required quality.
- I also understand that (1) Canada and the Independent Engineer (IE) monitor the activities of SSL to ensure they are performing in accordance with the Project Agreement and (2) all non-compliance reports opened by SSL and the IE are closely monitored and followed up on if we are not satisfied with how they are addressed.
- The Government of Canada objective is to build a quality project in the safest way possible so the bridge can be delivered by December 2018.
- As part of the acceleration measures being implemented by SSL, the Quality Management System and the workers' Health and Safety will be closely monitored to ensure that acceleration does not impact the project Quality and the workers' Health and Safety.
- The successful delivery of this major project depends on our ability to work together.

**Annexes:**

Annex A Background on Occupational Health and Safety, and on Quality

Annex B [REDACTED]

Annex C [REDACTED]

## **BACKGROUND ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY, AND ON QUALITY**

### **Occupational Health and Safety**

- As per the Project Agreement (Contract) between Canada and SSL, occupational Health and Safety issues on the site of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- Section 19 of the Contract deals with health and safety matters and is clear to the effect that SSL is responsible at all times for the safety of all persons on the site.
- SSL has been recognized as the principal contractor on the site of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project by the *Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail du Québec* (CNESST). The Contract states that SSL must take all necessary steps to fulfill its obligations, functions and duties under the applicable Health and Safety Laws. SSL must ensure that all persons working on the site respect their obligations under the applicable Health and Safety laws.
- Since the start of the project SSL has prepared and implemented a prevention program which is required by law and complies with Good Industry Practice. According to the Contract SSL must implement and keep updated a project-specific safety management plan (Schedule 17, Section 3.6). This plan addresses the approaches to safety and implementation of SSL's responsibility for the Health and Safety of all persons working on the project and the general public.
- Infrastructure Canada is kept apprised by SSL of matters related to Health, Safety and prevention on the site via a monthly report on the progress of project work and through bi-weekly meetings where certain safety and security related matter are discussed.
- Since the beginning of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project, the incident frequency is **2.04** compared to **8.78** at the provincial level as reported by the most recent statistics available from the CNESST for the year 2015 (See attached Annex A for more detail on Health and Safety-Lead Indicators).
- SSL is working with the unions and all the different teams on the site to improve its Health and Safety systems. In November 2017, SSL held a Health and Safety Forum in order to take a note of the concerns and recommendations of the participants. From this Forum SSL is developing an action Plan, which will be released soon.

### **Acceleration Measures and Occupational Health and Safety Concerns**

- Acceleration measures mostly target on-site works, requiring more shifts day and night. Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work, not trying to squeeze out more production.

- A review of SSL's safety indicators has shown that there is no correlation between the reported imminent dangers and the implementation of the acceleration measures since September 2017 where acceleration measures, requested by Canada, started to be implemented.
- With respect to prefabricated piers segments, these works are now all completed, so acceleration will have no impact. With respect to the fabrication of steel elements in Spain, SSL indicates that it has not implemented acceleration measures as the works are now progressing well (it is expected that steel pier caps will be completed by the end of April 2018).
- Fabrication of the 599 steel box girders in Quebec is now almost completed so acceleration will not impact this work either.

### **Quality – Roles and Responsibilities**

- As per the Project Agreement ("PA") between Canada and SSL (the Private Partner, or "PP"), quality management of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL. The PA describes in detail SSL's obligations, as well as the roles of the Independent Engineer (IE) and Canada in ensuring that SSL fulfills its contractual obligations.
- On December 4, 2017, different media articles reported that one year before the completion of the work on the new Champlain Bridge, the workers already had to make over 2000 repairs on key components of the bridge fabricated in Spain. Some media have also stated that the acceleration of construction activities could negatively impact the quality of the work, as well as increase the risk for the health and safety of the workers on site. The reports included quotes, reports and photos from six anonymous sources said to be working on the project. It is important to note that at the beginning of the prefabrication process in Spain, considering the transportation logistics involved and the fact that shipments leave at a frequency of about once per month, SSL had decided to have the Spanish prefabrication plant send some of their first steel segments before the final inspection and repairs were performed on said segments.
- This meant that SSL was fully aware that elements would not be "final" upon arrival and would need to be inspected and repaired, if necessary, on site in Canada. SSL changed its approach after the first few elements were delivered and decided to have the elements fully inspected, to the extent possible, repaired and signed-off on at the prefabrication plants in Spain prior to delivery. Some of the segments identified in the report that was the subject of news headlines were those elements that were sent not in their "final" state. SSL was fully aware that there would be defects on said elements that would need to be inspected, identified and repaired.

### **SSL**

- As SSL is responsible for quality under the PA, it undertakes a variety of activities to fulfil its obligation. It is required to certify the project management activities as ISO 9001 compliant, which ensures that appropriate systems and procedures are in place to ensure that quality is achieved. SSL also actively monitors construction, through two activities:

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- 1) Quality Control, where the construction teams with support of inspectors and testing laboratories carry out activities to ensure compliance; and
  - 2) Quality Assurance, where separate staff review the work of the construction teams.
- SSL undertakes extensive inspection and testing of construction to ensure the finished products achieve the required quality.
  - Non-compliance reports [REDACTED] are opened by SSL as required in order to ensure that both process irregularities and product deficiencies are corrected. Recurring irregularities, deficiencies, or non-compliance reports that are likely to reoccur unless process corrections are made, are addressed through a Correction Action Plan, which determines the root cause of the problems so that adjustments can be made.
  - Moreover, the P3 nature of the project provides a strong incentive for SSL to ensure the project activities its quality objectives. As SSL will operate the project for 30 years once construction is complete, it will have to have to repair any defects and/or increase maintenance to accommodate any quality shortfalls. In addition, the PA requires the project to be handed over to Canada in good condition at the conclusion of the 30-year operating period. The PA further provides that an Independent Handback Engineer will inspect the works at that time.

**Independent Engineer**

- The Independent Engineer undertakes Quality Management System Audits, and Surveillance Quality Audits. The former are audits of SSL's management of the quality function, including checking to ensure they are compliant with their ISO 9001 Quality certification, while the latter are inspections of construction activities and finished products.
- The IE files reports on its activities, and opens NCRs as required. This includes inspections at fabrication plants in Quebec and in Spain.

**Canada**

- Canada monitors the activities of SSL and the IE, to ensure they are performing in accordance with the PA. This involves reviewing the Quality Documentation, including Quarterly Reports and similar system documents, but also involves monitoring of SSL's and the IE's construction inspection. In particular, Canada closely monitors all non-compliance reports opened by SSL and the IE, and follows up if it is not satisfied with how they are addressed.
- In addition, Canada monitors construction activities, using an Owner's Laboratory (OL), the Owner's Engineer (OE), and internal staff. Canada opens non-compliance reports as required to address concerns identified by these three parties.

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## **BACKGROUND ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY, AND ON QUALITY**

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- Section 19 of the Contract deals with health and safety matters and is clear to the effect that SSL is responsible at all times for the safety of all persons on the site.
- SSL has been recognized as the principal contractor on the site of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project by the *Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail du Québec* (CNESST). The Contract states that SSL must take all necessary steps to fulfill its obligations, functions and duties under the applicable Health and Safety Laws. SSL must ensure that all persons working on the site respect their obligations under the applicable Health and Safety laws.
- Since the start of the project SSL has prepared and implemented a prevention program which is required by law and complies with Good Industry Practice. According to the Contract SSL must implement and keep updated a project-specific safety management plan (Schedule 17, Section 3.6). This plan addresses the approaches to safety and implementation of SSL's responsibility for the Health and Safety of all persons working on the project and the general public.
- Infrastructure Canada is kept apprised by SSL of matters related to Health, Safety and prevention on the site via a monthly report on the progress of project work and through bi-weekly meetings where certain safety and security related matter are discussed.
- Since the beginning of the New Champlain Bridge Corridor Project, the incident frequency is **2.04** compared to **8.78** at the provincial level as reported by the most recent statistics available from the CNESST for the year 2015 (See attached Annex A for more detail on Health and Safety-Lead Indicators).
- SSL has a work site health and safety prevention program with higher standards than those of the *Loi sur la Santé et Sécurité du travail (LSST)* and the *Code de sécurité pour les travaux de construction (CSTC)*. For example :
  - SSL requires that a worker be in protection against a fall as soon as he finds himself at a height of 1.8 m compared to the law that advocates this protection at 3 m.
  - SSL targets safety measures for all workers who are less than 3 m from the water's edge compared to the law that advocates 2 m.
  - SSL has signed and sealed lifting plans for all lifting of workers with crane in a basket compared to the law which has no obligation to produce a plan but only legal obligations on the cranes themselves and the baskets.
  - SSL does periodic inspections of its tools and equipment.
  - SSL has specialized teams dedicated to continuous marine rescues



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Health Security Audits:

- Occupational Health and Safety management system Standard (OHSAS 18001) Audit: SSL has been successful in obtaining this external accreditation every year.
- SSL does its own internal Audit every month.
- Corporate Audit conducted by the 4 partners of the Consortium every year. SSL was successful through these Audits with a respective score of 94% in 2016 and 94 % in 2017.

Union's participation:

- There are three full-time representatives of the unions at the site (represented by INTER, FTQ and SQC). They represent the workers' health and safety interests. They promote their member's health and safety and ensure that the health and safety plans are followed. In addition, the unions are actively participating to the different health and safety committee in place and they can communicate directly to the CNESST and CNESST's inspectors.

CNESST: An inspector is assigned to the Project.

- In 2017, there were 13 visits by an inspector.
- In 2016, there were 12 visits
- In 2015, there were 3 visits

Visits of health representatives Security partners (Consortium):

- On average, health and safety representatives of the various partners visit the Project Site 3 to 4 times a year.

Health and Safety Training

- Since the beginning of the project, SSL has given 22,560 hours of Health and Safety training.
- For 2017, 110975 hours of training has been given by SSL (risks on the water, working at heights, enclosed space, lifting platform, forklift, etc.).
- SSL is working with the unions and all the different teams on the site to improve its Health and Safety systems. In November 2017, SSL held a Health and Safety Forum in order to take a note of the concerns and recommendations of the participants. From this Forum SSL is developing an action Plan, which will be released soon.

Commented [RM1]: Added December 11<sup>th</sup>.  
Approved by DG Major Bridges

**Acceleration Measures and Occupational Health and Safety Concerns**

- Acceleration measures mostly target on-site works, requiring more shifts day and night. Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work, not trying to squeeze out more production.
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- With respect to prefabricated piers segments, these works are now all completed, so acceleration will have no impact. With respect to the fabrication of steel elements in Spain, SSL indicates that it has not implemented acceleration measures as the works are now progressing well (it is expected that steel pier caps will be completed by the end of April 2018).
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### **Quality – Roles and Responsibilities**

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- This meant that SSL was fully aware that elements would not be "final" upon arrival and would need to be inspected and repaired, if necessary, on site in Canada. SSL changed its approach after the first few elements were delivered and decided to have the elements fully inspected, to the extent possible, repaired and signed-off on at the prefabrication plants in Spain prior to delivery. Some of the segments identified in the report that was the subject of news headlines were those elements that were sent not in their "final" state. SSL was fully aware that there would be defects on said elements that would need to be inspected, identified and repaired.

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  - 1) Quality Control, where the construction teams with support of inspectors and testing laboratories carry out activities to ensure compliance; and
  - 2) Quality Assurance, where separate staff review the work of the construction teams.

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- SSL undertakes extensive inspection and testing of construction to ensure the finished products achieve the required quality.
- Non-compliance reports [REDACTED] are opened by SSL as required in order to ensure that both process irregularities and product deficiencies are corrected. Recurring irregularities, deficiencies, or non-compliance reports that are likely to reoccur unless process corrections are made, are addressed through a Correction Action Plan, which determines the root cause of the problems so that adjustments can be made.
- Moreover, the P3 nature of the project provides a strong incentive for SSL to ensure the project activities its quality objectives. As SSL will operate the project for 30 years once construction is complete, it will have to have to repair any defects and/or increase maintenance to accommodate any quality shortfalls. In addition, the PA requires the project to be handed over to Canada in good condition at the conclusion of the 30-year operating period. The PA further provides that an Independent Handback Engineer will inspect the works at that time.

**Independent Engineer**

- The Independent Engineer undertakes Quality Management System Audits, and Surveillance Quality Audits. The former are audits of SSL's management of the quality function, including checking to ensure they are compliant with their ISO 9001 Quality certification, while the latter are inspections of construction activities and finished products.
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- Canada monitors the activities of SSL and the IE, to ensure they are performing in accordance with the PA. This involves reviewing the Quality Documentation, including Quarterly Reports and similar system documents, but also involves monitoring of SSL's and the IE's construction inspection. In particular, Canada closely monitors all non-compliance reports opened by SSL and the IE, and follows up if it is not satisfied with how they are addressed.
- In addition, Canada monitors construction activities, using an Owner's Laboratory (OL), the Owner's Engineer (OE), and internal staff. Canada opens non-compliance reports as required to address concerns identified by these three parties.

**Pages 32 - 33  
are withheld  
pursuant to paragraph  
20(1)(b)  
of the *Access to Information Act***

**\*\*\*\***

**Les pages 32 - 33  
Font l'objet d'une exception totale  
conformément aux dispositions de paragraphe  
20(1)(b)  
de la *loi sur l'accès à l'information***

**BRIEFING NOTE TO THE DEPUTY MINISTER**

**NEW CHAMPLAIN BRIDGE:**  
**URGENT MEETING REQUEST WITH THE UNION**

**ISSUE**

- SSL and Canada have agreed in principle to a series of measures to accelerate construction of the New Champlain Bridge. This is being done due to the project encountering delays that, without acceleration, would result in the bridge opening later than the contractual deadline of December 1, 2018.
- On December 4, 2017, the Journal de Montreal and TVA (also picked up by other media) reported that more than 2000 pre-fabricated bridge components, primarily from Spanish subcontractor Tecade, had non-conformities that required correction on the worksite. These reports included quotes, reports and photos from six anonymous sources said to be working on the project. An SSL project director, who was interviewed on December 1, was also quoted.
- On December 5, 2017, the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction (International) sent a letter to Minister Sohi requesting an urgent meeting with the Minister of Transport, Marc Garneau. [REDACTED]
- Following the letter, Minister Sohi did a scrum in the House of Commons Foyer informing media that he will talk and meet with the union in the coming hours and days. Following the scrum media reported that the Minister will meet with the union [REDACTED] to discuss the project schedule and the union's concerns with regards to the acceleration measures and how they may impact worker safety.
- The purpose of this note is to explain the safety-related provisions of the contract between Canada and SSL and to outline key considerations for the Minister in preparation for his meeting with the union.

**BACKGROUND**

- As per the Project Agreement (Contract) between Canada and SSL, occupational health and safety issues on the site of the New Champlain Bridge project is the responsibility of SSL.
- Section 19 of the Contract deals with health and safety matters and is clear to the effect that is responsible at all times for the safety of all persons on the site.
- SSL has been recognized as the principal contractor on the site of the New Champlain Bridge project by the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité au travail du Québec (CNESST). The Contract states that SSL must take all necessary steps to

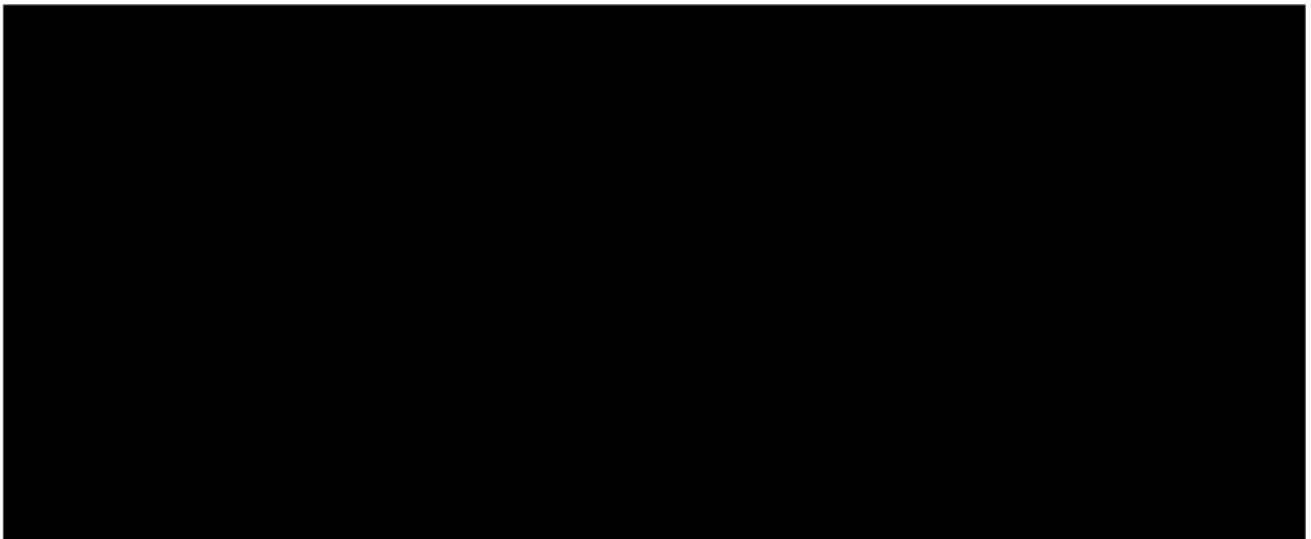
**PROTECTED B**

fulfill its obligations, functions and duties under the applicable Health and Safety Laws. SSL must ensure that all persons working on the site respect their obligations under the applicable health and safety laws.

- Since the start of the project SSL has prepared and implemented a prevention program which is required by law and complies with Good Industry Practice. According to the Contract SSL must implement and keep updated a project-specific safety management plan (Schedule 17, Section 3.6). This plan addresses the approaches to safety and implementation of SSL's responsibility for the health and safety of all persons working on the project and the general public.
- Canada is kept apprised by SSL of matters related to health, safety and prevention on the site via a monthly report on the progress of project work and through bi-weekly meetings where certain safety and security related matter are discussed.

**Acceleration Measures and Occupational Health and Safety Concerns**

- Acceleration measures mostly target on-site works, requiring more shifts day and night. Accordingly, acceleration implies additional staff and more hours of work, not trying to squeeze out more production.
- This said, with respect to prefabricated piers segments, these works are now all completed, so acceleration will have no impact. With respect to the fabrication of steel elements in Spain, SSL does not need to implement acceleration measures as the works are now progressing well (it is expected that steel pier caps will be completed by the end of April 2018).
- Fabrication of the 599 steel box girders in Quebec is now almost completed so acceleration will not impact this work either.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

**Page 36  
is withheld  
pursuant to paragraphs  
21(1)(a) & 21(1)(b)  
of the *Access to Information Act***

**\*\*\*\***

**La page 36  
Font l'objet d'une exception totale  
conformément aux dispositions de  
paragraphes  
21(1)(a) & 21(1)(b)  
de la *loi sur l'accès à l'information***

Marc Fortin  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Infrastructure and Communities

Date